From: Rich Wickman <rwickman@sover.net>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2009 7:01 AM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Comments re corporate control of our food system

I'm writing because I have serious concerns about the direction(s) our food system is taking in the country.

Here in Vermont, several farmers have joined together to sue Dean Foods, a huge conglomerate that is controlling most of the fluid milk market in the Northeast and beyond. Their profits continue to go up quite nicely, yet our farmers are getting the same price per hundredweight for the milk that they got in 1979!!!

Monsanto is doing their very best to control seed varieties thru their GMO process. I care deeply about the food I get and eat, and it's harder for our local coops to find non GMO seeds. It's not just soy beans- this is affecting corn, vegetable seeds, sugar beets- it's an endless list.

We are doing our best to raise our own food, locally and regionally. It seems that the Federal Government is doing their very best to discourage this, by watering down the organic labels, and now allowing the importation of "organic" foods from mainland China. Please remember that this is same country that adulterated their milk supply with melamine.

Please allow the little guys a chance to compete on a fair and level playing field.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to comment.

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